

**Africa, Global Human Rights and International Relations
Subcommittee**

**Foreign Relations Authorization for FY 2006-2007: Embassy and
Border Security**

**Prepared Statement of Christopher H. Smith, Chairman
May 12, 2005**

The Subcommittee will come to order. This is the second hearing this committee is conducting this year on legislation to authorize the foreign relations programs and activities of the United States for fiscal years 2006 and 2007. Today the Subcommittee will consider the security of our U.S. missions abroad and of the people who serve in these missions. We will also be examining the security of our borders, as it relates to the work of our overseas missions to protect U.S. borders against the illegal entry of terrorists and others who would threaten homeland security.

In August 1998 the world was shaken by the terrorist bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Among the results of those despicable acts was the appointment of Accountability Review Boards for each incident, chaired by Admiral William Crowe. Admiral Crowe testified before this subcommittee in 1999, and confirmed the finding of the Crowe report that over 85 percent of all U.S. diplomatic overseas facilities did not meet the security standards established as a result of the 1985 Inman report findings.

As a result of that hearing and the inadequate levels of funding identified for capital improvements and worldwide security, Congress responded with a major new funding package. I was the prime sponsor of HR 3427, the Admiral James W. Nance and Meg Donovan Foreign Relations Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 2000 and 2001 (The Embassy Security Act), which among other things, authorized \$900 million per year for five years for Embassy Security, Construction and Maintenance.

Since that time, 15 major capital projects have been completed, including new embassy and consulate compounds, as well as USAID annex buildings, and another 39 projects are under construction or design. In addition, thanks to a cumulative total of \$816 million appropriated to the Compound Security Upgrade program since the Embassy bombings, the Overseas Building Office (OBO) has undertaken 125 major security upgrades such as construction of perimeter walls, vehicle barriers, and building security upgrade projects. 1,011 post-managed minor upgrade projects have also been completed.

Out of a Department of State FY 06 overall budget request of \$9.28 billion, security initiatives include \$1.5 billion for security-related construction of U.S. Embassies, \$690 million to increase security for diplomatic personnel, and \$930 million for border security programs, increases of 1.5%, 5.4% and 7.6% respectively. These requests include funding for 55 additional diplomatic security personnel positions and 55 new consular

positions. Under the Capital Security Construction program, eight new embassy compounds and four USAID annexes would be funded.

However, the sobering news is that while we have made progress, there is still much to be done. If the Department receives funding as requested and implements its Long-Range Overseas Buildings Plan through the end of FY 06, approximately 56 percent of overseas facilities will *still* not meet security standards.

In a related area, GAO testimony on overseas security before the Government Reform Committee two days ago found that State has not developed a comprehensive strategy that clearly identifies safety and security requirements and resources needed to protect U.S. officials and their families abroad from terrorist threats outside the embassy. The Department itself concluded that officials lacked the necessary hands-on training to help counter terrorist attacks against U.S. officials outside of embassies. While \$29.8 million has been appropriated by Congress to address security vulnerabilities against soft targets, particularly overseas schools, limited guidance over the eligibility of non-State Department sponsored schools has resulted in spotty implementation of phase III of the program.

Sadly, it took another terrorist attack, this time on our own home soil, for us to begin to rectify longstanding vulnerabilities in our border protection systems. Approximately 60 families from my Congressional district lost loved ones in the attacks on September 11th, 2001, and the post office from which the anthrax attack originated is also located in my district. I insisted on the establishment of the 9-11 Commission because I was determined to ensure that the individuals who lost their lives in the World Trade Center and in the Pentagon did not die in vain. I supported and fought for border security provisions in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, including the requirements that non-immigrant visa forms be completely and accurately filled out, that anti-fraud specialists be placed at high-fraud posts, and that consular officers themselves review and adjudicate visa applications.

I cannot state more strongly my conviction that we deploy biometric technologies to facilitate document authentication and detect potential terrorist indicators as soon as possible, including the Western Hemisphere initiative to require individuals entering the United States, including American and Canadian citizens, to present proof of citizenship and identity.

We are fortunate to have today as our witnesses to address these important issues General Charles E. Williams, Director of the Office of Overseas Buildings, and Mr. Gregory B. Starr, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Countermeasures in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

We also welcome Mr. Daniel Smith, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of Consular Affairs, to discuss the vital issue of border security and the work of our overseas missions in preventing the illegal entry of terrorists and others who would threaten homeland security.

In conclusion, let me commend this Administration for its leadership on these critically important security issues. The magnitude and rapidity of the changes we have seen in the past four years is impressive, particularly in light of the complexity of the problems we face. There is no more important antidote to the terrorist threat we face around the world than to safely deploy American representatives to explain, listen, and interact with others face to face. Your programs are a vital component in this equation. Let us think together about the resources and programs which are needed to accomplish our common goal.